



On a cold December day in 1937 I was born, the last of five children to Fritzie and Louise Baer. My childhood in Laconia was uneventful. I was fortunate to have parents who where compassionate and loving and embraced moral values that have stood the test of time.

I have deep New Hampshire roots. My father was a terrific promoter of New Hampshire. With his vision of the future and determination to complete a task, he was destined to be a competent administrator. He started the annual Laconia Bike Week in 1937. In 1950 he was recognized for his organizational skills and became the director of what is now the Gunstock Mountain Resort in Gilford where that annual motorcycle rally was held for many years. That event has brought tens of millions of dollars into New Hampshire economy over the years. The Concord Monitor credited him as being one of One Hundred people who shaped "The New Hampshire Century". A good man and a great father.

After graduating from Laconia High School, I enlisted in the United States Air Force for a four year tour of duty. After being honorably discharged, I returned to New Hampshire and accepted a job as a manager of the Weeks restaurant in the Dover/Rochester traffic circle. Weeks then opened a restaurant in Concord at the new Capital Shopping Center and I had a successful career there for many years.

To earn extra income, I was a movie projectionist at the old Capitol Theatre (now the Capitol Center for the Arts) in the evenings. It was fun and the extra dollars allowed me to indulge in a favorite hobby, muscle cars of the 1960's. Concord was a small and friendly place back then. Everyone knew everyone else.

In my late twenty's I took Horace Greeley's advice and moved West to Colorado where I established a respected reputation as a fine wine merchant. New England beckoned to me to come back home. I purchased a successful bed and breakfast inn and shook sheets for twenty-three years. I retired in 2003 and settled into my current home near White Park.

I am no Spring chicken. What I lack in youth is compensated by the knowledge I have gained from lessons I learned in the school of hard knocks. I know the value of a 60 hour

work week. I am constantly reminded of my father's work ethics. Nothing worthwhile happens unless you work hard at it. I intend to honor his advice if I am privileged to become your Concord city councilor.

I am fiscally conservative and will spend your precious tax dollars prudently and wisely. Concord's total tax burden has outpaced population growth during the last fifty years. It has gotten worse in the last decade, driven by a school budget that focused on simultaneously building three new schools and the possibility of a new middle school in the future. All this debt at a time of declining school enrollment.

The school budget has a direct correlation to the city budget. There is a limit on how much property tax increases the Concord taxpayers will tolerate in a budget cycle. It appears to me that the school budget always wins that contest. Then there are the county and state education taxes. That results in the city's portion of the budget that has to cover all of the demands of the other important city functions with limited dollars. It's not fair but it is the system that we are stuck with because of the city charter.

Steady as you go is not an answer to our fiscal problems. That policy only compounds our problems and feeds into the policy of spending our way out of debt. It doesn't work.

I believe that we should focus on maintaining and upgrading the current city infrastructure before taking on more new capital intensive projects and debt. It's time to take a pause on discretionary spending, recover from the Main Street and the Sewalls Falls bridge projects and make an honest faith effort to keep our budget under a 3% annual increase. This is possible but it means that we will have to tighten our belts and table some worthwhile projects.

Concord is an exceptional place to live but we sometimes tend to be a bit self-indulgent. That's fine as long as you are at the top of the economic and social pecking order. Those less fortunate still struggle to keep up with our high property taxes and government fees. They need a sympathetic friend on the city council. I will always keep them in mind if I am elected your city councilor.

The greatest gift that I can hope to give to Concord taxpayers is a pledge to cast a NO vote for the next budget if exceeds a 3% tax increase. Inflation is low and vehicle fuel costs are at a stable low point and should give us an unexpected bonus that will help reach that figure.

My desire to serve on the city council is not driven by an inflated ego or self-importance. I got those under control years ago. I am too elderly to have on track shoes to seek higher office or a need to burnish my resume. Concord has been good to me and I want to return the favor.

If the voters of Concord put their trust in me and provide me the privilege to represent them as their city councilor, I will give them 100% of my best abilities to be a good and trustworthy steward of their tax dollars and serve them with integrity and a devotion to transparency and accountability as a councilor.